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TEACHING GEOGRAPHY, ILLUSTRATED.

THE mind is naturally inquisitive. We see the evidence of this in the questions asked by children respecting any subject that engages their attention. This natural disposition of the mind to inquire into the reason of things, when properly cultivated and strengthened, stimulates the mind to a greater exertion of its powers, and leads to a thorough investigation and comprehensive understanding of the various subjects presented for its consideration; but when pupils are required by those to whose care they are committed for instruction, to accept words without ideas, and facts without principles, this inquisitiveness of mind loses its natural force, and becomes feeble and inactive; and thus the main avenue to the development of the mental powers, and to true knowledge, is closed.

These remarks, while true in their general application, have a special application to the methods of instructing youth in the various branches of study pursued at school. As an illustration, we may take the methods of teaching Geogra-

phy. The common method is to assign a lesson in the book, and require the pupils to commit to memory the answers to the several questions contained in it. If the answers are correctly repeated the pupils receive the approbation of their teacher for having a "good lesson," and the next lesson is assigned, and so on. Pupils thus taught, if asked: "What is the earth?" will answer (with satisfaction to themselves and the teacher too), "The planet on which we live." To show the unprofitableness of such teaching, let me ask: Of what real benefit is it to a pupil to repeat the answer above, if it is unintelligible to him, as it must be, if he has no distinct idea of a planet, and no explanation has been given? He might repeat, with equal profit, the answer given in an old geography: "An oblate spheroid." In like manner, the simple answer that the axis of the earth is "an imaginary line passing through the centre of the earth," profits little; for the pupil will be at a loss to understand why a line should be imagined to pass through the earth's centre in one direction, rather than another, or why any line should be imagined at all; or if the answer be: "The line on which the earth turns," the pupil will conceive of a ball revolving on a rod, or a wheel on an axle, and then wonder what kind of a line the earth turns on.

To be able simply to repeat from the book the answers to the questions: What is the earth, its shape, axis, poles? etc., is really of but little value. The pupils should be familiar with the ideas contained in those answers. To aid them in acquiring that familiarity, many explanations and illustrations are required from the teacher. Instead, however, of being confined to the questions and answers of the book, let the teacher take up the subject apart from the book, and, in a few familiar lectures, let him convey to the minds of the pupils the fundamental ideas of the subject; bearing in mind at the outset, and as he proceeds, that the ideas and conceptions of the subject, so familiar and distinct to his own mind, are almost wholly wanting in the minds of his pupils. Thus, since Geography is, as the word itself signifies, a description of the earth, the first question that arises, is: What is the earth?

But instead of asking the pupils this question at the outset, let the teacher rather, by a course of plain, simple (not silly) questions, prepare their minds for the full import of such a question. Proceeding from the known to the unknown (inductive reasoning,) let the pupils first be questioned respecting the portion of country in which they live, and with which they are more or less familiar. This will lead to inquiries respecting the portions of country or bodies of water lying beyond, and these inquiries (answers to which may be supplied by the teacher) will lead to still others in the same direction, and so on, till the general inquiry is raised in the minds of the pupils: Where and what is the limit to this vast plain (apparently) of lands and seas, in the midst of which we are living? In like manner, the inquiry may be raised respecting the depth of the earth beneath us. Following the track of discovery, the views of the ancients respecting the extent and foundations of the earth, may here be given, then the views of Columbus, directing special attention to the object of the expedition (based on his views) which led to the discovery of America. And thus the pupils may be led along, step by step, till they are enabled to realize, in some good degree, the important facts respecting the form and extent of the earth, as developed by modern science.

The question will now arise in the minds of the pupils: What is the foundation of the earth—on what does it rest? As this question is suggested by the idea that an unsupported body will fall, the teacher must proceed at once to acquaint his pupils with the principles of inertia and gravitation; and here, as elsewhere, let him bear in mind that in the natural order, ideas precede names; therefore, distinct ideas of these principles should first be conveyed to the minds of the pupils, after which, the names by which they are designated may be given. A knowledge of these fundamental principles of matter, and their application, will qualify the pupils for an intelligent understanding of the facts, which may now be stated, respecting the earth's isolated position. With distinct ideas of the size, form, isolated position of the earth, the attention of the pupils may now be directed to the relation of

the earth to the heavenly bodies. In pointing out this relation, let it first be impressed upon the minds of the pupils, that the heavenly bodies—sun, moon, and stars—are in reality immense bodies of matter, like the earth. The idea of a Planetary System may then be unfolded—a Sun as the centre, giving forth light and heat to other smaller bodies (planets) revolving around it, while around these smaller bodies revolve one or more still smaller bodies (satellites or moons), the planets and satellites reflecting, each to the other, the light emanating from the sun. Next, may follow the statement, that, though the Universe, according to the revelations of Astronomy, is probably composed of many such systems, or a combination of them, we have definite knowledge of but one such system—our own—of which the Sun is the centre, the Earth, and a few, comparatively, of the stars, (in appearance), are the planets revolving around it, and the Moon is the satellite revolving around the Earth. In this connection, it might be well for the teacher to state a few facts respecting our planetary system—the comparative size of the bodies composing it, their relative distances from each other, etc.—also to explain the cause of the similarity in appearance, to us, of the planets and fixed stars (suns). The motion of the planets and satellites in their orbits, will be readily understood by the pupils if briefly explained by the teacher, the principles (inertia and gravitation), which combined, produce planetary motion, having been already explained. A knowledge of the principle of gravitation, will also enable the pupils to account for the spherical form of the earth and heavenly bodies.

Having obtained a definite knowledge of the earth as an immense sphere, revolving, in common with other similar bodies, around the sun, the pupils are now prepared for the next step in order—the revolution of the earth on its axis. After stating the fact that the earth revolves (turns over) at the same time that it moves around the sun, let the teacher proceed to convey to the minds of his pupils, by means of suitable illustrations, an exact idea of what is meant by the axis and poles of the earth—their only idea of an axis, hith-

erto, being that of a rod, of some kind, on which a wheel or ball revolves. As an auxiliary idea, let the teacher show that lines and points (definite, fixed directions, and positions), may exist without any outward, visible marks or signs to indicate them. And thus let him show the pupils, that in the revolution of a body (spherical or other form), though it be solid, and hence no rod passing through it on which it revolves, there will still be a certain fixed line or direction through it, around which the body (the particles forming it) revolves, and two fixed points (positions) on the surface of the body where the line terminates—the line and points being determined by the direction in which the body revolves.

The pupils now understand that the poles of the earth are two fixed points on its surface, their position being determined by the direction in which the earth revolves. From the poles as starting points, the equator and parallels are determined. A few words respecting meridians, and an explanation of the use of parallels and meridians, in determining the relative positions of portions of the earth's surface, or points on its surface, and the pupils are now prepared for an intelligent and successful pursuit of the study upon which they have entered.

In determining the position of the tropics and polar circles, and in showing how the change of seasons is produced, which may here be done, an explanation of what is meant by the plane of the earth's orbit, and of the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit as it revolves around the sun, will be necessary. This will be rendered comparatively easy, however, as the facts and principles upon which this part of the subject is based, have been already dwelt on. At the proper point, the exact form of the earth (spheroidal) may be stated, and the probable reason of it given, also the elliptical form of the earth's orbit.

The course marked out thus far, if carefully pursued, will occupy the time, not of one or two recitations, but of many; since it contemplates, not the strengthening of memory simply, but rather the expansion and growth of the mind in all its faculties—a work requiring time, since growth of mind,

like growth of body, requires time. New ideas are to be unfolded, and their relations carefully pointed out, requiring much time for the explanations and illustrations thereby rendered necessary. The pursuit of such a course, however, will not only result in the growth and discipline of the mind—one of the most important ends to be attained in a course of instruction—but the true foundation will be laid for the successful pursuit of the particular branch taught.—*Exchange.*

RAN ADKINS.

I DID did not enter into school life by way of the clock-peddler's cart, as some people seem to think all the old-fashioned schoolmasters did. I made my advent among teachers in a very humble way, however. I began in a field school-house, one badly built at that, in the hilly region of Western Virginia. I was never specially educated for the profession. There were no normal schools in those days. A wandering teacher would come along, generally from New England, and the neighbors would club together, and send him a sufficient number of pupils. He would teach for a year or two, take up a bit of ground, indulge in speculation and quarter-racing, range a few cattle in the neighboring hills, get well-to-do, and then abandon his school to a new-comer, or to itself. In that way, the "rising generation" had the taste of a variety of teachers, and a touch of various systems of instruction. All the latter were based, however, on the knock-down and drag-out plan. A teacher was considered most excellent, who could flog the whole school into subjection in a month; but he who managed to terrify the little boys and thrash the big ones, on the first day, was a pearl of great price, indeed.

I was born in that section, and was well acquainted with the manners and customs of the sturdy mountaineers. When about eighteen, I went to Baltimore, in company with some drovers, liked the place, got an inferior situation in a warehouse, and remained there for three years. While there, I

picked up a variety of accomplishments. I could smoke the most villainous tobacco without the least damage to my nerves; in euchre, I had the degree of doctor, by general consent; and a professor of the manly art of self-defense, whose heart I won by my faculty of always dealing to myself both bowers and the ace, taught me how to use my fists after the manner of the late lamented Yankee Sullivan. But a yearning for the green forests and clear streams came over me, and I returned to my native county, where I obtained a place as a clerk and salesman in a country store, at the county-town, called as all the shire-towns are in that section, "the Court-house." In that responsible position I flourished exceedingly, for a time.

But my good fortune did not last very long. About six months after my arrival, the firm of Skinner & Cheatham, general dealers, gave way, and became anything but solvent. The partners had a large confidence in human nature, and the goodness of mankind in general, which that portion of human nature and mankind there resident repaid but illy. Everybody, or nearly so, was in debt to them, and nobody paid. As the firm had started without capital, it had a capital failure. There was another storekeeper in the place—Andrew Schwindler—but he was his own clerk, and wanted no aid. There I was, about the beginning of winter, without a situation, and possessed of capital health, and ten dollars, forty cents. "Something or somebody had to be done," as some author with lax notions of morality, puts it. What, or who? was the question.

A bright idea came. I will teach school.

The last teacher had left a month before, carrying with him a black eye, as a token of regard from the biggest boy in the school. No one had mustered courage to take his place. The mass of the pupils might indeed be managed; by force or stratagem; but there was one, who was more untamable than the wild horse of the desert. Randolph Adkins—familiarily known as Ran Adkins—was the Mordecai to the Hamans of the rod, the terror of pedagogues, Lord of Misrule, and chief Cock of the walk.

I had, however, no particular terror of Ran Adkins. He and I were firm friends. He was a stout, strapping boy of nineteen years, with all the thews and sinews of a man of thirty. He could jump farther, run faster, and lift a greater weight, than any one for twenty miles around. He was not a promising scholar, being only able to read by skipping the hard words, and after having attended every school opened for ten years, could only cipher as far as long division. He would have done better, but for a theory. He took it into his head that no teacher could do him any good, unless he was able to pound him first. As Ran—whose father had let him grow up like a wild colt—was plucky and stout, for five years no teacher had been able to take the necessary first steps, and the acquirements of the junior Adkins had not increased. I had no fear of him, however, partly because he and I were good friends, and partly for another reason, to be revealed in the sequel.

I announced that I would open school on the Monday following. The next day, which was Saturday, Ran waited on me in person.

"See here," said he; "are you gwine to keep school?"

"I am, Ran."

"Well, hold your hosses. It's a resky business. Ther's some pooty bad boys that'll come, and you'll git licked afore ye know it. You've got a heap of booklarnin up thar in furren parts"—Baltimore was considered foreign in that section—"but it won't do."

Ran did not mean that the learning wouldn't do, but the attempt to keep school.

"Oh," said I, "that'll be all right. There won't be any one there that you can't whip, and you must help me through."

"It can't be did!" was the emphatic answer. "Round yer, it's all right. Ef any chap was to tackle you, I'd pitch in sudden; but no man kin larn me anything that don't lick me fust; and I reckon you don't think you kin lick me."

I had my own thoughts on that matter, but kept them to myself.

"Well," said I, "I'm sorry, Ran; but I've promised, and I

intend to keep my word. If we two do have a fight you must fight fair."

"I'll do it," cried Ran, his eyes brightening; "nary goug-in', nor hittin' when yer down, but a fair, stand off affa'r. But ye'd better go to somethin' else."

I shook my head. Ran endeavored to persuade me to renounce my foolish intention, but in vain. He left, at length, with a mournful air. He liked me very much—he had a great admiration for my many good qualities; but it was a point of honor to whip the schoolmaster, and before his sense of his duties as a public character, his feelings of private attachment gave way.

Monday morning came, and the school children gathered together. A very healthy, honest, and ignorant set they were; with quick perceptive faculties, generally, a good material for fine men and women. But they did not come as participants in school exercises on that morning. They were there as spectators. It was understood that Ran Adkins was to "lick" the new master, and they were there to witness the pleasant and improving spectacle.

So soon as nine o'clock arrived, the little hand-bell was rung as a signal, and the pupils entered, with Ran at their head, and took their seats. I explained to them how I expected them to behave, and what I wanted them to do; and after examining them each briefly, I arranged them in classes. Ran I left to the last.

"Now," I said, "I am about to examine you, Randolph Adkins, in order to see where I shall place you. Come up to the desk."

"It can't be did," said he, shaking his head. "You've got to lick me fust, you know; and I'll be —" here he added a word more forcible than elegant, "ef it lies in your boots to do it."

"Randolph," said I, coolly, "I have just laid down two rules to the school. One forbids profane words, and the other all vulgar expressions. You have violated both these rules, and it is necessary to punish you for the offense, as well as to set an example to others in the matter."

I advanced to Ran, who saw I was in earnest. The school was quiet with expectation. The little girls all huddled closer, and the eyes of the boys dilated with expectant delight. Ran waited until I came within arm's length, and then aimed at me a ponderous blow. The blow was weighty, the intention earnest; but what are intentions and blows, against science? My old lessons in fisticuff knowledge were brought into play. I parried the blow with my right hand, and "put in a left-hander," as the fancy say, that "floored" my antagonist. Down went Ran with a force that made the puncheon floor rattle. As agile as a cat, he was on his feet in an instant; and in his rage at the unexpected blow of mine, ran forward to grasp me by the throat. Left open to my tender mercies, he received a blow from my right hand, and down he went again. He rose a little slower than before, and approached with more caution. At last, he ventured another blow, which I threw off easily with my left arm, and, in return, gave him "a right-hander," which brought him to his back.

Ran rose slowly, shook himself, wiped the blood from his nose with his handkerchief, came towards me, paused, then shook his head, and went towards his seat. Before he sat down, he looked around, and addressed the wondering pupils in these memorable words:

"Boys, we've got a master o' some account. Ef any one kin teach a man, *he* kin. That's certing."

My throne was now secure. The chief rebel had given in his adhesion, and we went to business.

I have taught school for many years—for my success in that enterprise fixed my vocation; I have guided the feet of thousands in the path to knowledge, as well as taught myself a deal; but I never have had a pupil so docile as Randolph Adkins, nor one who made so much progress in so short a time. He pursued knowledge after the fashion that Jehu drove—furiously; and now that he is a famous lawyer, he never comes to attend the Supreme Court, in the city where my large and popular Academy is located without devoting one evening to recalling old times to our memories; and laughing with me over the day when I set him upright in the temple of knowledge, by first knocking him down.—*Exchange.*

THE TEACHER AS A TALKER.

1. He should be an easy one. Of all men he most needs fluency of speech. A few disagreeable twitchings of face and sawings of hands have nearly destroyed my interest in the utterance of one of the best thinkers I have ever known. Much more difficult is it, then, for the young mind to maintain an interest in the talking of the teacher who has to labor, to work even the most common-place thoughts into words! What sorer infliction any where than a hard speaker? Is not the wonder that the young pupils stand as well as they do, *belaboring* with words?

The most prudent teacher must talk much, and physically to talk easily, is of no slight importance.

2. The teacher should be a *ready* speaker; a minute man in the use of verbal expletives—not merely or principally in the enunciation of theories in the great assemblies where pedagogues congregate, but before his daily classes. His mind and tongue should be set like the most delicate hair-trigger; he should be able to bring down mental birds as they flit by, “on the wing.”

3. A forcible talker the teacher should surely be, and to be such he must be *clear*. This is the most important quality in any speaker's style, how doubly needful that of him who deals with young, undisciplined minds! And to speak clearly we must think clearly. A wonderful reflex influence speaking and thinking have upon each other. Clear streams do not flow in muddy channels; and if you and I can not use language to make a pupil “see” some point, should we not inquire if the root of the matter is really in us? Why do our public men say they “can't talk to children?” Not because their great ideas can not be compressed enough to enter juvenile minds, but because such minds will be interested in nothing but good and *clear* sense.

A clear, forcible style must also be *terse*. Every word in a sentence is either a burden or a support. And, like a chaste pillar for beauty or strength, every proposition should

bear no needless weight. "Who is this that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge?" I suppose the truth must be told, the answer must be given—the careless teacher. When I hear a speaker make a most excellent point, and then, instead of stopping, continue to qualify the first or make another, until both are spoiled, I think of a painter, who, wanting just to touch some lineament of an already finished picture, finishes it, indeed, as I could—by dropping his brush upon its face. How much harder is it to know *when* to stop talking than how to begin! But the forcible, successful teacher must be *earnest*. Hear the best authority on this subject: Clearness, force, earnestness, are the qualities which produce conviction in minds of any age. If a teacher stops to take one gape, when attempting to illustrate some thought, be assured, meanwhile, his pupils will take two. A teacher's soul must be in the work, or it will not breathe forth in his words. Ah! we love the calm self-possession of the good disciplinarian, but never would we have it purchased at the price of that enthusiasm which fires up its possessor, even before his little audience.

4. An eloquent talker; and this is what he must be, if successful. Yes, let the law sprig laugh, and the young divine sneer at the thought of eloquent tones issuing from the schoolmaster's desk. The man who can stand daily before the piercing eyes and plastic minds of children, and feel not interest enough in the truth he is presenting, or in the welfare of his immortal charge, to rouse in his breast some eloquent fire, has no soul for eloquence.

5. A discreet talker—not a long, random declaimer. Truth, pertinent truth and fact, will form the basis of all eloquence—its limit will be utility. No man more than the teacher needs to know just when to speak, what to say, how to say it, or (hardest of all) when to stop. Judgment, judgment is the great thing in every business of life. I would give more for some generals who have handled one regiment, in one battle, than for some others who have spent two score years in military life. Far are we from despising all proper and needful aids to any profession. We feel too sensibly the

need of them in our own; but yet, we do not believe that unless nature has *instituted* certain faculties in a man, and given him certain normal principles, all exotics planted by Institutes and watered by Normal Schools will bear little fruit.

I have little *patience* with those who speak of that quality as the only one the teacher need possess. A *wooden* man is patient, or at least insensible. But the teacher, without tremendous energy behind his patience, is a poor affair. Upon how many and various things the teacher must decide! and the decision, too, must be instant. When should come the gentle reproof, when the kind word of encouragement, when the stinging sarcasm, when the stern command?

And do not suppose we think the teacher should be continually lecturing his pupils, either on morals or class studies. O, the *power* of *silence*,—the force of a motion or look!—the pressure of a quiet, self-reliant reserve force upon a school. We envy, at least we would emulate, the power of the man who is so completely master of himself that the worst school can draw from him no word of irritation, whose true dignity and self-respect a legion of bad boys could not disturb. Such a one may strike if the occasion requires, but will never scold.

Fellow-teachers, if you forget all my words, remember those of teachers inspired.

"He that ruleth his own spirit is mightier than he that ruleth a city." Such a one will rule others. "Words, fitly spoken, are like apples of gold in pictures of silver." If there be any place where such "pictures" should be hung, it is in the school room, and the teacher is to hang them there. "For every idle word that men speak, they shall be called to give an account thereof in the day of judgment." How great the responsibility, then, of him whose every word is echoed in scores of young hearts.—*Penn. School Journal*.

ON TEACHING READING.

Give short lessons, and take special pains to select such pieces for reading exercises as are suited to the capacity and adapted to the needs of those for whose use they are inten-

ded. Although the reading lessons in our Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and High School Readers are, for the most part, unexceptionable in a moral or in a literary point of view, yet very few of them are suitable pieces for children of any age who are learning how to read.

The surest and the quickest way to kill out any interest that young persons may have in reading and elocutionary exercises is, to require them to practice upon pieces which they can neither appreciate nor understand.

Pass over all pieces in the reading book which are characterized by a loose, redundant, fanciful, florid, ornamental or highly rhetorical style, and select those only in which the meaning or the sentiment is clearly expressed, in plain, simple and appropriate language.

Insist upon pupils studying their reading lessons thoroughly, until they know everything about them, and understand everything in relation to them, that it is necessary for them to know and understand, in order to read them correctly.

Frequently subject pupils to a searching examination, for the purpose of finding out to what extent they have mastered the lesson. And here let me remark, that no teacher is competent to drill a class in reading on any example, until he (the teacher) himself has mastered the passage or the piece, and is able to tell and explain in his own language, to his pupils, whatever it may be necessary to tell or explain to them, in order to give them clear ideas and a correct conception of the piece. No one can talk intelligently about that which he does not understand; neither can one teach another how to read a passage who has not in every way mastered the page himself.

Make it an invariable rule to call the attention of the pupil to any fault or mistake immediately after it is committed. If the attitude was wrong in any respect, point it out to him and make him take a proper position. If he does not manage the breath right, explain the fault to him. If he does not give the necessary force or quantity to his emphatic words, call his attention to it, tell him what he should do, and show him *how* to do it. If his voice is not pitched right,

if he speaks too loud or not loud enough, too fast or too slow; or if he does not appear to understand what he is reading.—in short, whatever the mistake or fault may be, call not only his attention but the attention of the whole class to it,—and have him repeat the word or sentence on which it occurred, again, *until he gives it as it should be given.*

When the pupil discovers that his slightest fault or mistake will be noticed and instantly pointed out, and that he will be drilled upon the word or passage in which it occurs until he gives it correctly, he will be more likely to study his reading lesson carefully, and to make whatever preparation may be necessary, in order to read it as it should be read.

Pupils are frequently, I might say generally, permitted to read the paragraph through without interruption, though they may have made a dozen mistakes in the reading of it. In the majority of cases, the pupil's faults and mistakes are not pointed out to him at all; if they are, it is done in an improper manner; hence such criticism and corrections make but little impression on the pupil's mind, and so far as regards the good they do, might be dispensed with altogether.

If teachers would take one half the pains to make their pupils good readers, that they take to have them excel in some other branches, a wonderful and most gratifying improvement in the reading and elocutionary exercises of pupils of every grade, would soon be very apparent.—*Indiana School Journal.*

MISS DUNNSTABLE'S SPELLING-CLASS.

In the course of a visit paid to one of our Union Schools not long ago, I was particularly interested by the exercises of a certain class in spelling, or perhaps I should say, *dictation*. The method pursued had been practiced here with entire success for several seasons, and it seemed to me worthy of adoption into our common district schools. I append an outline of the recitation to which I listened, as a better illustration and recommendation of the system than anything else I could say of it.

Miss Dunnstable's spelling-class, I would premise, numbered fifteen. Lesson had been assigned for study from Saunders's Fifth Reader, that happening to be the text-book in use by the pupils. It commenced thus:

LESSON LXXXVI.—*The Christian's Hope.*

"Say, what is hope?" I asked an ancient sage,
With tott'ring gait and head quite white with age."

Class sat in line facing their teacher. Their Readers were piled up on her table. Each pupil was provided with a pencil and a *clean* slate.

"Attention to dictation," said Miss Dunnstable.

As soon as every eye was fixed upon her, she commenced pronouncing the lesson, a few words at a time, in a slow, distinct manner, class writing what she repeated.

"Lesson eighty-six." Writing by class. "Title:—'The Christian's Hope.'" Writing, as before. "First line of poem:—, Say, what is hope?" Writing. "I asked an ancient sage." Writing. "Second line:—'With tott'ring gait,' etc."

When each pupil had completed a fair copy of the eight lines comprised by the lesson, she was desired to attach her signature thereto.

"I am very particular about two or three little things," said Miss Dunnstable to me, "I demand the full attention of my class. I maintain an appearance of perfect leisure, that no one may fail through a feeling of being hurried. I speak so as to be distinctly heard. I pronounce no more words at one time than each student can fully retain. I never give out a second set of words till the first has been written by every member of class. This done, I do not encourage inattention by repeating anything twice. These trifles aid greatly, I find, in training my pupils to habits of attention and accuracy."

"Change slates!" said the lady. "Pass them from the foot to the second above you."

No. 15 passed her slate to No. 13 for correction; No. 14 sent hers to No. 12; No. 13 gave hers in turn to No. 11, and so on; the two at the head sending theirs to Nos. 15 and 14, at the foot. Sometimes, as I was told, slates were corrected by the *first* pupil above, sometimes by the first or sec-

ond *below*, and occasionally toward or from the middle of class. This was intended to prevent trickery.

"Attend to correction," said Miss Dunnstable.

Class intent on mistake-finding. Errors, on being detected, were underscored and numbered, and at the close of recitation announced to the teacher, who, in turn, made a weekly report of the class, and read it to the assembled school on Friday.

Miss Dunnstable commenced spelling the lesson aloud:—"Capital l-e-s-s-o-n L-XXX-VI, period."

"Title:—Capital t-h-e, capital c-h-r-i-s-t-i-a-n apostrophe-s capital h-o-p-e, period."

"Olive Brown has spelled lesson—*lessen*," answered a little girl.

"And Mary Bookstaver has left the apostrophe out of her *christian's*," said another.

"Miss Dunnstable, I *know* how to spell lesson," said Olive Brown, "but sometimes when I go to write it I ca'n't think which way it ends."

"Quotation-marks, capital s-a-y, w-h-a-t, i-s, h-o-p-e, interrogation-point, quotation-marks," etc., etc.

Mistakes were pointed out at the end of every two or three lines, corrections thus made being better remembered than when more was undertaken at once.

Occasionally rules were called for.

"Give the rule for your capital s."

"It begins a piece of writing," said one.

"And a line of poetry, too," answered another.

"Why did you not write your whole *title* in capitals, as it is printed in your Readers?"

"It is n't the rule to *write* a title so, because it would look awkward."

"If you were writing something for the printer that you wanted put in large capitals, what would you do?"

"Place three straight lines under it."

"If you should wish something in small capitals?"

"Put two lines underneath."

"In italic?"

"One line."

VOL. XI.

COMPOSITION.

The question is often asked "How shall the writing of composition be made a pleasant exercise?" We believe we are approaching a solution of this question in our schools. These exercises commence in the Primary Schools in connection with the Language and Object Lessons. The children begin the written exercises by reproducing the Object Lessons on their slates. In these schools the lessons are reproduced on the same day that they are given, and in the Junior Schools, the day following. This gives a written exercise as often as three times a week, in which attention is given to expression, punctuation and the proper use of capitals. In these exercises the children take pleasure, and they are an excellent preparation for the more formal exercises in the higher grades. The great mistake in regard to these exercises is that no proper preparation is made for them by previous training in the right use of language, in which they gain facility of expression, and in that, when first put upon exercises of this character, they undertake to express thoughts they never had, on subjects they know nothing of. Now children can do impossibilities no better than adults, and that composition writing should prove a failure or at least be unsatisfactory, under such circumstances, is not to be wondered at. The subject of language is sadly neglected in the schools, and demands more careful attention and cultivation. We believe that first to observe accurately, and second to express with accuracy the result of these observations, should be the foundation stones in every system of education. Important as these principles are, they have hitherto been too much overlooked in our educational processes. Public attention is now being turned in this direction, and we look for immediate and decided improvement in these respects.—

A. E. SHELDON.

OFFICIAL DEPARTMENT.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS, }
NEW BRITAIN, Sept. 23, 1864. }

The following amendment to the school law, was passed by the last General Assembly and approved July 9th.

An Act in addition to "An Act on Education."

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Assembly convened:

All applications, made to the selectmen and board of visitors for the abatement of tuition bills assessed by any district, shall be made within twelve months from the close of the school term, for which such tuition bills are due.

Approved July 9th, 1864.

By this act rate or tuition bills must be presented to the selectmen or school visitors within one year after they are made out, to be entitled to abatement. This law was intended to prevent drafts being made upon the town treasury for old school bills, or for indebtedness of parents of poor children unless such bills are presented within reasonable time after the indebtedness was incurred.

DAVID N. CAMP,
Superintendent of Common Schools.

LOCAL AND PERSONAL.

EAST HARTFORD. We are glad to learn that an important step has been taken in this town,—securing permanency and a liberal support to the High School by laying a tax on the property. It is a good move and will give satisfaction. D. P. Corbin, A. M., of Willimantic, has been elected principal of the school and will enter upon his duties in November. Mr. Corbin is a well-qualified and efficient teacher, and we feel confident that the school will prove highly prosperous under his charge.

PORTLAND. Mr. C. F. Holt, late of East Berlin, succeeds Mr. Paddock in this place. Mr. Holt is a graduate of the Normal School and a faithful teacher. He has done a good work at E. Berlin.

ROCKVILLE. The members of the largest district have voted to pay their district committee \$50 per year. A good move. Elect a man who will *do* the necessary work and then pay him for it. In to many cases district committees render the least possible service and that very grudgingly.

NAUGATUCK. Mr. W. H. Dyer, late of Cromwell, has taken the graded school in this place, and under his charge we hope it will be elevated and made to assume a high rank. Mr. Dyer has had much experience and taught successfully at Terryville and elsewhere.

CROMWELL. Miss Laura F. Beecher of Bristol has been selected to take charge of the High School at this place, and we doubt not that she will prove an efficient and acceptable teacher.

DANBURY. N. C. Pond, Esq., for several years principal of the graded school at Ansonia, has entered upon his duties as principal of the graded school at Danbury. We congratulate the citizens of Danbury in having secured the services of one so well qualified and efficient as Mr. Pond.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE. We intended to give a somewhat detailed account of the meeting of this association at Portland, but we are unable to do so at this time. We can find space for only the following brief reports of two of the lecturers well known to many of our readers. These we clip from a Portland paper.

J. N. Bartlett, Esq., of New Britain, Ct., delivered an address on the Influence of school life upon the character of the Scholar. He spoke of the importance of teachers securing the confidence and love of the scholar, as the only means of rendering him successful in his profession—of the importance of punctuality and promptness on the part of the scholar as indispensable to improvement—of the necessity of neatness in dress and person and in the school room—of the importance of a wise discipline, firmly and constantly maintained—of encouraging honesty and truthfulness among scholars, giving memorable examples of the success of men who have been of marked honesty and truthfulness—said it was the business of the teacher to cultivate and improve the moral as well as the intellectual powers of the scholar—spoke of the importance of having due regard for the physical condition and improvement of those who are placed under the care of teachers.

He spoke feelingly of the thousands of noble men educated in our schools and colleges, who have gone forth to sustain our national flag, and have fallen with their faces to the enemy—of the bravery of those

who have been foremost in their classes while at school, which has been exhibited on every battle field—spoke of the importance and responsibility of the teacher's mission and the necessity of a thorough course of mental and moral training preparatory to occupying that position.

The lecture was delivered in an easy and eloquent manner, and received with applause.

"J. W. Allen, Esq., of Norwich, Ct., gave a lecture on "The Teacher an agent, not a servant." The distinction to be observed in these terms was defined—the agent retains his own individuality—the servant loses it. Teachers are men who retain their own judgment and autocracy. He has a *profession*, and is not a parasite of any other profession or employment. The demands laid upon the teacher require that he be an agent, and every interference with his plans overturns the result of his labor. If it be admitted that the teacher is but the servant and tool of the parent, then he must be equally so of the refined and cultivated, and of the illiterate and vicious.

The teacher is more than the public—he is a maker of the public; more than the ruler—he is the maker of the ruler.

The lecturer proceeded still further to demonstrate his position from the responsibility and accountability of the teacher. It is in the position of the teacher as an agent, that his highest success is found. The best interests of the state, of the family and of the individual, demand that the teacher be free and untrammelled in his individuality.

Mr. Allen's address was interspersed with many fine patriotic allusions, and drew forth the frequent applause of his audience by his eloquent periods."

ARITHMETICAL FRAME. We would call the attention of our readers to this new article,—advertised by Messrs. Brownell & Boardman. It will prove quite a labor-saving machine and by its use the teacher may have a new example for practice before the eyes of the school. It will require but a moment so to adjust the frame as to give a new combination of figures. (See Adv't.)

TEACHER'S INSTITUTES.

The Institute for Litchfield county, will be at WOODBURY, commencing Tuesday, Oct. 18th: that for New London county, and also that for Windham county will be held during the same week,—commen-

cing Tuesday, Oct. 25th. The former will be held at LEBANON and the latter at PUTNAM.

The Institute for New Haven county will be held sometime in Nov. Due notice of time and place will be given.

STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION. We learn that the annual meeting is necessarily postponed till November. Due notice of the place and time will be given in the newspapers, and by circulars.

CUTTER'S ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, AND HYGIENE. A knowledge of the principles of Physiology, and Laws of Hygiene is much needed, as is manifested by the numbers that seek exemption from military duty. To aid in the dissemination of such knowledge, I will supply to teachers only, my works upon Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene, at lowest wholesale dozen price, and give a set of large illustrative colored Charts, 8 to 10 in set. For particulars address CALVIN CUTTER, Warren, Mass.

BOOK NOTICES.

THE AMERICAN CONFLICT: a history of the great rebellion in the United States of America, 1860—1864: its causes, incidents and results: intended to exhibit especially its moral and political phases, with the drift and progress of American opinion respecting human slavery from 1776 to the close of the war for the Union. By Horace Greeley. Vol. I., 8vo. 648 pp. HARTFORD: O. Case & Co. Chicago: Geo. & C. W. Sherwood.

The above is the title of one of the most interesting, valuable and instructive works ever issued from the Americana press. It is a plain and truthful history of our great conflict, written by one eminently fitted for the work, and should have a place in every house in our land, and be read by all who would have a clear understanding of the great issues at stake and of the trying ordeal through which, as a nation, we are passing.

The work is well illustrated with steel plate portraits of Generals, statesmen and other eminent men: views of places of historic interest; maps, diagrams of battle-fields, naval actions, etc.

TEACHERS' GUIDE to Ellsworth's New System of Practical Penmanship. By H. W. Ellsworth, Teacher of penmanship in the public schools of New York city.

This is a very valuable little work and will prove worth ten times its cost to any teacher who will carefully study and follow its instructions. We do not know the price but presume it will be sent to any address postage paid, for about 13 cents. Address H. W. Ellsworth, 817 Broadway, New York.

SARGENT'S READERS. We have examined these new reading books with much satisfaction and do not hesitate to give them our unqualified approbation. The selections have been made with much good judgment and the instruction and rules in relation to elocution and the marks guiding the pronunciation are very full and clear.

The books are five in number adapted to the wants of the several classes in our schools. JOHN L. SHORRY of Boston is the publisher,—and his long experience as a practical teacher has well qualified him to know the wants of our schools and he has well performed his part. (See Adv't.)

THE COMPREHENSIVE GEOGRAPHY.—By Benj. F. Shaw and Fordyce A. Allen. 4 to 114 pp. with a full pronouncing vocabulary. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

We would call the attention of our readers to the advertisement of Messrs. Lippincott and to this new geographical work. We have examined the book with much interest and satisfaction. The maps are beautifully executed and the text seems to have been prepared with good judgment.

THE GLOBE MANUAL, designed for Teachers, Scholars and Private Students. By David N. Camp. 12mo, 29 pp. Chicago: Geo. & C. W. Sherwood.

This little work—which we understand is to be followed by a more comprehensive one, will prove a most welcome book to many teachers and pupils,—just such a book as has been much needed. The globe ought to be used much more frequently than it is and we hope this little book will tend to promote its more general use,—by telling how it may be used.

THE PROGRESSIVE FIFTH, OR ELOCUTIONARY READER; FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES: in which the principles of Elocution are illustrated by reading exercises in connection with the rules; and followed by a variety of appropriate selections for reading and declamation, with biographical and explanatory notes. By Salem Town, L. L. D., and Nelson M. Holbrook, A. M. Revised and enlarged. 12mo. 608 pp. Boston: Oliver Ellsworth.

About one-third of this volume is filled with rules, directions and drill lessons of an Elocutionary nature, and well chosen selections from many of the best writers fill the remainder of the book. We commend it to teachers and committees as a good book for the higher classes in Schools and Academies. (See Adv't.)

THE SCHOOL PSALTER. Messrs. Crosby & Ainsworth, (late Crosby & Nichols,) of Boston, will give Oct. 16, 1864, "The School Psalter," a collection of Psalms and Hymns for devotional exercises in schools. By Alonzo Norton Lewis, Supt. of Schools and Principal of High School, Waterbury, Conn.

Teachers wishing copies for examination will please address the publishers, or Alonzo Norton Lewis, Waterbury, Conn.

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Surrounding the relief maps are cuts representing the animals and plants peculiar to or characteristic of the countries.

The sectional maps of the United States are drawn upon a uniform scale.

More briefly, *the work is novel in nearly all respects.*

It will be mailed for examination by school officers, on receipt of \$1.00.

SUE'S FRENCH METHOD.

A NEW, PRACTICAL, AND INTELLECTUAL METHOD OF LEARNING FRENCH, grounded on nature's teachings; adapted to the system of Noel and Chapsal, with critical remarks on Grammars used in our schools, - - - \$1.50

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The whole forming a complete oral and synthetical course. By Jean B. Sue, A. M., formerly pupil of the Royal School of Soreze.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO., Publishers,
Philadelphia.

October, 1864.